UNITARIAN MONTHLY

No. 203. (Vol. XVII—8). AUGUST, 1920. ONE PENNY.

This Magazine Stands Frankly for Unitarianism.

Not for a stagnant Unitarianism but for a living and a growing Unitarianism. Not for a faith the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, but for a faith that is ever free to be enriched, changed, and enlarged into something better. Not for the Unitarianism of our spiritual ancestors, but for our own Unitarianism of to-day, and looking meanwhile for the grander Unitarian faith of the future. Not for the errors and narrowness of the old Unitarianism, but for its truth and for larger visions of truth which are now part of the New Unitarianism. For "all of good the past has had, remains to make our own time glad," and we rejoice in the truth won by our ancestors, treasured and preserved in our faith of to-day.

We stand for free thought, free inquiry, freedom from bondage to fixed creeds, and free proclamation of all that free inquiry has revealed. We stand for the Unities which the free search after truth and the free exercise of reason have discovered: the Unity of God, the Creator and Father of all souls, the Unity of Man, the Unity of Life, the Unity of Righteousness, the Unity of Truth, the Unity of Religion, the Unity of Man with God, the Unity of all souls in final salvation from evil and in the joy of immortal life. These Unities and the doctrines they imply, constitute the Unitarian Faith. They are the permanent and unchanging elements of our religious belief, in accord with reason, in harmony with science, taught by Jesus and therefore truly Christian, enriched by every new revelation and to be glorified by all the new light that is to come. For this Unitarianism we stand.

M.B.

Notes and News.

A review notice of a book by the Rev. J. Cyril Flower, M.A., entitled—"The Parables of Jesus applied to Modern Life," is held over for our next issue.

The annual meetings of the Ulster Remonstrant Synod, of the Association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians, and of the General Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, all three organisations of Unitarians, were held June 15-16 in the First Presbyterian (Unitarian) Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast. They agreed in expressing abhorrence at the lawlessness that was rampant in their distressful country.

The Provincial Assembly of the Unitarian Churches of Lancashire and Cheshire, held at Dukinfield on June 17th, was well attended. Rev. J. Morley Mills was the preacher, and the President, Rev. Dr. Stanley Mellor, delivered an impressive address on "Christian Unity."

The Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association asks that names and addresses of isolated Unitarians living in places where there is no Unitarian place of worship, shall be sent to him at Essex Hall, London.

The Rev. C. J. Street, M.A., LL.B., has accepted a pressing invitation to be the preacher at the Pilgrim Fathers' celebration at Boston, U.S.A., in October next.

The Unitarian Movement has lost a fine open-air propagandist in the death of the Rev. E. T. Russell, B.A., of Glasgow, on June 17th.

The New Gravel Pit Unitarian Sunday School, Hackney, had its 130th anniversary on July 4th. It is believed to be the oldest Unitarian Sunday School in London. What other Unitarian Sunday Schools in this country are older? The 130th anniversary of the Shrewsbury Unitarian Sunday School was held on June 20th.

The annual meetings of the Scottish Unitarian Association, and of the Scottish Unitarian Sunday School Union, were held recently, at which it was reported that much quiet but constructive work is being carried on.

Manchester University has conferred the degree of D.D. upon the Rev. H. McLachlan, M.A., B.D., Warden of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, won by theological work; and it has given the degree of LL.D. to the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, M.A., Litt.D.

The Rev. G. A. Payne has been presented by the Knutsford Literary Society at the hands of the President, Judge Mellor, with a cheque for fifty guineas in recognition of his work for the Society during the past thirty years. Nine years ago, when the Society came of age, a presentation was made to Mr. Payne.

Sir Rabindranath Tagore, the famous Indian poet and theist, is now on a visit to England.

The Rev. W. H. Burgess, of Plymouth, secretary, Unitarian Historical Society, author of a book "John Robinson, Pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers," recently published, has been graduated M.A. by the Manchester University.

The Liverpool Baptist Union has severed its connection with Pembroke Chapel, of which the Rev. J. Vint Laughland, Unitarian, is now the minister.

The Ministerial Fellowship held its 21st annual meeting in Manchester, June 30th, with 244 on the roll of membership. Presentations were made to the Rev. C. J. Street, M.A., LL.B., and the Rev. Dendy Agate, B.A., in recognition of their services as secretary and treasurer for 21 years.

The closing proceedings of the session of Manchester College, Oxford, of the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen, and of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, Manchester, have taken place under more hopeful conditions.

A memorial tablet to eighteen members killed in the war was unveiled in the Park Street Unitarian Church, Hull, on June 27th.

Rev. Albert Thornhill, M.A., arrived in Auckland, N.Z., April 13th, and was inducted a few days after when the church was practically filled by a large congregation which gave a most hearty welcome.

Mr. D. R. Llewellyn, J.P., a prominent South Wales Unitarian, is giving a Rest Home for ministers to Porthcawl, and endowing it with £10,000 for upkeep.

The University of Sheffield has conferred the degreed of LL.D. upon Alderman A. J. Hobson, J.P., and the M.A. degree upon Mr. E. M. Gibbs, both Unitarians of the Upper Chapel, Sheffield.

The Missionary Conference held its annual meeting in Manchester on July 1st with Rev. W. C. Hall, M.A., as President, who pleaded for clearer definition of the Unitarian Faith. It was decided to assist the grouping of Unitarians at Colwyn, North Wales, and other places.

The North Cheshire Unitarian Sunday School Union held its annual picnic at Gee Cross, July 3rd, having a ramble after tea.

Rev. E. Morgan, B.A., of the Lytham Road Unitarian Church, Blackpool, has stirred up much local discussion by a sermon "The Peril of To-day"—the materialist tendencies of the age.

The Unitarian Historical Society held a meeting in Manchester, June 30th, when Rev. J. J. Wright read an interesting paper on the History of Chowbent Chapel.

Mr. T. Fletcher Robinson, treasurer of the National Conference, has been visiting Canada and America, and has conveyed his cordial greetings and good wishes to the American Unitarian Association, also as President of the Northern Federation of Sunday Schools.

Mr. Chas. H. Strong, Chairman of the Unitarian Laymen's League of America, has addressed Unitarian congregations at Sheffield, Bristol, and other places on "Anglo-American Friendship."

Rev. H. Williamson gave a good account to his congregation at Dundee of his visit to Manchester Cross Street Chapel and the Home Missionary College. One of his young people, Miss Jean Whamond, has been awarded the Dux Gold Medal for the year at the Morgan Academy Secondary School, Dundee.

The Huddersfield Unitarian Church has again increased its minister's stipend to meet increased cost of living. The congregation grows under Rev. L. J. Hines.

Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, the parent chapel of Manchester Non-conformity, is chosen for the Young People's Demonstration with a choir of 200 voices for the Manchester Celebration of the Pilgrim Fathers Tercentenary, Saturday, September 18th, when Rev. R. W. Thompson, M.A., Congregationalist, will deliver an address.

There is widespread sympathy with Rev. and Mrs. Priestley Evans, of Bury, in the loss of their only son, killed in action in Mesopotamia, July 8th 1920.

A party of North Midland and Sheffield district Unitarians paid a visit to the places in Lincolnshire associated with the Pilgrim Fathers, on July 8th.

The Northern Sunday School Federation Summer School for Sunday School Teachers at the Unitarian Home Missionary College, Manchester, has been a gratifying success, and has included students from Glasgow, Nottingham, Sheffield, and South Wales, as well as from the Manchester district.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES: Rev. H. Bodell Smith concluded his ministry at Mottram, June 27th, and received farewell presentation; Rev. A. W. Fox, M.A., has resigned at Todmorden, also Rev. Charles Biggins, B.A., B.D., who has accepted appointment to the Wandsworth Unitarian Church; Rev. E. Rosalind Lee B.A., resigned, Pentre, South Wales, to go on tour in America has received public farewell and presentation; Rev. Ottwell Binns has concluded his ministry at Ainsworth, and entered upon his new sphere at Mansfield.

DEATHS: Mr. A. K. Stewart, Monyrea, Belfast, interred June 11th; Rev. E. T. Russell, B.A. Glasgow, June 17th, 69; Mr. E. G. Brown, at Hassocks, June 19th, 75; Mr. Richard Barlow, Chesham, Bury, 50; Mrs. Langwell, Sheffield, 48; Henry D. Wesley, Sheffield, 66; Mrs. Turton, Sheffield, 72; Mrs. Mitchell, widow of Rev. Wm. Mitchell, Romiley, June 25th, 77; Colonel Trevelyan Penzance May 12th; Mr. Frank Selby, Wareham, 80; Mr. Geo. Andrews, J.P., of Belfast, at Port Ballantrae, July 3rd, 66; Mrs. Geo. Courtauld Halstead, July 4th; Rev. W. H. Eastlake, Bolton, June 6th, 85; Mr. W. T. Forrest, Aberdeen, 60; Mr. James Cavan, Ballee, 80; Mr. Edward Beggs, Ballycarry, 85; Major Robert Evans, Leicester, July 4th, 42; Capt. M. Priestley Evans, of Bury, killed in action, Mesopotamia, July 8th, 28; Mr. F. Woolley, Manchester July 11th, 77.

Will church officials who send calendar matter, please send their copy in early in publishing week which is the week preceeding the last Sunday of the expiring month?

BACK TO THE GOSPEL OF JESUS.

8.—Social Revolution. **By the Rev. WILLIAM C. HALL, M.A.**

THERE is little doubt that if the teachings of Jesus were carried out in our social life they would effect a revolution far greater than any contemplated by the most drastic of our social reformers. To believe this we have only to reflect his sayings in the Sermon on the Mount. The society that did them would soon find itself completely transformed; and it would then probably also find that instead of being founded on shifting sands it was founded upon a rock,—the rock of human trust which is seriously neglected to-day.

Society is held together to-day by safeguards which suggest the mistrust, rather than the love, which men have for one another. Trust would bring the great revolution we need. It would effect a change from within greater than all the changes we try to effect from without: for change is what we endeavour to impose upon society rather than to develope inwardly.

It is sometimes said that if Jesus were to come again to earth he would behave towards human society much as he acted in the Temple when he drove out the money-changers; he would break into it, and break it up. This is a wild statement. We shall find this probable attitude indicated in his judgment on those who asked his opinion on tribute to Ceasar. It was for them, he said, to accept the social order as they found it, but to do the things of God. Social change was to be effected not by social rebellion but by adding religion to politics. The Christian Church is failing to-day because it is not making that addition. It is not getting the spirit of religon into the heart of politics. Until it does this, it will look helplessly upon society in its convulsions; it will not see the social revolution that brings peace on earth and goodwill among men.

THE ETERNAL RIGHT.

Oh, sometimes gleams upon our sight,
Through present wrong, the eternal right!
And, step by step, since time began
We see the steady gain of man;—

That all the good the past has had
Remains to make our own time glad,
Our common daily life divine,
And every land a Palestine.

For still the new transcends the old
In signs and wonders manifold;
We need but open eye and ear,
To see God's mysteries always here.

Through the harsh noises of our day
A low sweet prelude finds its way;
Through clouds of doubt and creeds of fear
A light is breaking calm and clear.

—J. G. Whittier.

For the Children.

By the Rev. H. Fisher Short.

HOW TO GET TO THE BOTTOM.

"The wisdom packed in proverbs
'Silly piffle' was to Joe;
Hence, while others climbed the ladder,
He just cooled his heels below."

"R-r-r-r-r-ch!"
"Ch-r-r-r-roo!"

No, it isn-t a bit of the native tongue of Mr. Lloyd George; it is an attempt to imitate the weird noises made by Joe Lloyd when he ought to have been up and dressed and at breakfast.

Joe loved his bed; at any rate, of a morning. and, until, in desperation, his mother tore the bedclothes off him, he simply would not get up.

Shortly afterwards, he would appear—half-dressed, half-washed and with barely time for half a breakfast. Joe had a short memory.

By dinner time, school having waked him up, he was as perky as though he had risen early. If Dad teased him by saying, "It's the early bird that catches the worm," Joe would look cheeky and reply, "That catches the cold, you mean." Or if mother said, "Early to rest and early to rise makes a boy healthy, wealthy and wise," with a smirk he would respond, "Makes a boy sleepy when he ought to be otherwise." Then, perhaps, Nancy, in her severest teachery tone, would try to freeze him with, "Where ignorance is bliss!" Quite unabashed, Joe would add, "'tis folly to be there." Then everybody would laugh and, in their hearts, Mother and Dad would feel proud of their quick-witted son.

But borrowed parodies of sound maxims are not a sufficient equipment for life. Among other things, a boy needs rest, and wise parents see that he gets it. Joe's parents were not wise; they allowed him too much liberty. And it was as hard to get him into bed at night as it was to get him out of it in the morning; with the result that not only was he never properly rested but formed habits of laziness, disobedience and insolence. Moreover, to their dismay, Joe's parents saw their 'clever' son out-classed at school. Later on, to their shame, they saw him unfit for positions requiring smartness, industry and self-respect. And the time came when they almost despaired of his future.

Nancy, however, determined to bring him to his senses. In her best copy-book style, she wrote out improving mottoes and pinned them up in Joe's bedroom. One was,

"Rise with the lark, all the day is your own;
Mind your own business, let other people's alone."

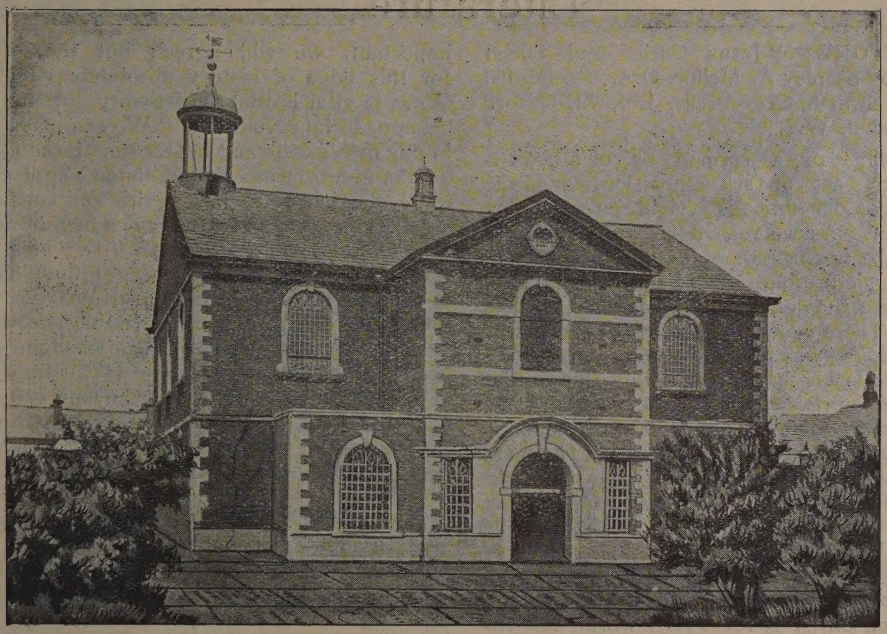
The incorrigible Joe just tore off the top line and pinned up the remnant in Nancy's bedroom. But Nancy was too sensible to be annoyed, and too determined to be discouraged: she just 'kept on keeping on.' Sometimes her motto was torn in halves and pinned in her hat; sometimes it was torn into tiny bits and scattered over her dressing table; sometimes the unwilling pupil was too lazy to do more than scribble "Bosh" or "piffle" across it.

The crisis was reached, however, when Joe, looking as if he had lost a shilling, announced that he had 'got the sack!' The shock had a sobering effect on the whole family. Mother wept—and stopped Joe's pocket money. Dad pretended to smile—and put Joe through a course of stern discipline. Nancy saw her chance and seized it. She told Joe she loved him but she wanted also to be proud of him. He grunted; but the next day she found he had written a motto for himself. It ran—

"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night."

—(Longfellow.)

That was the other day. Joe is at the bottom of the ladder: but his eyes are fixed on the top, his upper lip is stiffened, his fists are clenched, and, now that he is really awake, I believe he will climb higher.



CHOWBENT CHAPEL, ATHERTON.

CHOWBENT Chapel, Atherton, Lancashire, is about eleven miles north-west of Manchester. The congregation originates from 1645, and was turned out of the first Presbyterian Chapel by the lord of the manor on whose land it stood, and he handed it over for Episcopalian use, the Atherton Parish Church now occupying the same site. The present Chowbent Chapel was then erected, 1721, on freehold land part of the farm of a yeoman named "Chow" (rhymes with flow) on the "bent" or hill, hence the name "Chowbent Chapel." Rev. James Wood called "General" Wood, who was the minister at that time, was awarded £100 by Parliament for raising a troop of Atherton men, and leading them against the Pretender at Preston. This money he generously gave towards the building, which is a substantial structure this day surrounded by an extensive graveyard.

The Mort family residing then at Alderfold, a large house situated very near, generously assisted in contributing to the cost of the chapel, and befriended the congregation in many ways. In the eighteenth century the theology of ministers and people became Unitarian. The Morts entertained many prominent Unitarians. Dr. Joseph Priestley, Theophilus Lindsey, Rev. Thomas Belsham, Mrs. Barbauld, and others were guests under their roof. The congregation has remained Unitarian. It is very influential in Atherton, and its ministers have a high standing in local estimation. The pulpit is a "three-decker," in which formerly the clerk occupied the lowest, the reader the middle, and the preacher at the top. The Eckersley family has in more recent times given various benefactions to the chapel. There is a considerable congregation, as well as a large and flourishing Sunday School. The Rev. J J. Wright, F.R.S.L., for many years editor of "Young Days," has been the minister for 28 years (1891—1919), retired recently, and is now Minister Emeritus of Chowbent Chapel, with Rev. Mortimer Rowe, B.A., as his successor in the pastoral charge.

"Nothing and Something
Are relative terms;
Easy and hard
Are the same;
The long to the short
A proportion affirms,
Which the high to the low
Also claim.
The tones and the notes
Are but modifications,
And before and behind
Only changed situations."

Literature.

LITERATURE: "Jesus Christ and Social Change," by Stanley A. Mellor, B.A., Ph D.. 3s. net. The Swarthmore Press, Ltd, 72, Oxford Street, London, W.1.

The writing of a sermon or of a book is obviously an act of self-expression, and the volume now under notice is a vivid self-revelation of its author. As we read it we are struck not only with the importance of the subject treated, and by the picturesque quality of the language, but also with the sincerity and moral passion of the writer. There is considerable prophetic power in Dr. Mellor's pages, a directness and a compelling force in his manner of saying things that take hold of the reader and carry conviction. He makes clear the spiritual significance of economic facts and relates everything to the soul. The book is revolutionary as is the teaching of Jesus. The necessity and inevitableness of social change are plainly set forth. The gospel of Christ "is the one remaining hope for mankind, the only way out of chaos into harmony and order, the one road of salvation for a broken world" (p. 8). "The preaching of Christ is for THIS world, not for another world beyond this; the morality of love is to be the rule for life here" (39). But "Jesus Christ is still the greatest thorn in the side of Christians: they cannot get along without Him, but they do not really know what to do with Him: they feel moderately safe so long as He is on the Cross, but if you bring Him down into the world of ordinary life He seems to confuse things very considerably" (146). Jesus came to proclaim God's kingdom, but Dr. Mellor speaks of Christ's kingdom as thus: "the true purpose of the Church is the kingdom of Christ in this world." In Chapter IV. this phrase "the kingdom of Christ" is used over and over again. It is a phrase that has very scant scriptural authority. It would be easy to understand its use if Dr. Mellor were known to believe that Christ and God are one and the same being, but he writes of Jesus as distinct from God, though he uses such expressions as, for instance: "that Christ is the only rightful Lord of all life" (72), "the only True and Fitting Lord of Creation" (119). Yet he says: "When He (Jesus) thought of God, He thought not of power but of love" and "Jesus said ——— that the activity of God ——— was just the energizing of sympathy" (138).

But if Dr. Mellor's Christology is somewhat puzzling, that is quite a secondary consideration as regards this book. Indeed he says so himself: "We may regard Christ as very God of very God, or we may not; we may theologize or not theologize concerning Him; we may have this Christology or that, or the other. Such matters are important, we will agree; but they are not for this hour of history absolutely vital" (26). What is vital is that Christianity means social change, social revolution: "We can make certain in our own minds and hearts that Jesus Christ is on the side of radical and fundamental change, that allegiance to His Faith and Gospel does signify change of that kind which men mean when they talk of social revolution" (61). This revolution must not come by violence, but by "The way of Christ! The way of reason, persuasion, love!" (59). The change that is inevitable and which is even now in progress is "radical change—change in the basis of human society" (47). "I am utterly at a loss to understand how anyone can preach Christ without at the same time preaching the destruction of an order of society which quite apart from Christ, is riddled by criticism from every point of view of beauty, ultimate value, justice, righteousness, and all the higher faculties and possibilities of man's soul" (48). "If we preach Christ, we have our faith fixed also in the equality of souls, and the fundamental, inalienable right of all souls, and each soul, to every equal opportunity of freedom, development, self-realisation, advancement along the road of spiritual, intellectual, moral, and bodily fulfilment that this world, or any world offers" (33).

In the three last chapters of social studies of the parables of "The Prodigal Son," "The Rich Fool," and "The Good Samaritan," we have not only much criticism of the present un-Christian system of society, but some beautiful universalist theology. The pictures of God as the Father who does not punish the prodigal, who never ceases to love and to forgive; God as the good Samaritan of this world,—are such as every reader cannot do other than take to heart. As an interpretation of the mind of Jesus this book is a powerful revelation for many who may read it. Its social and spiritual idealism, its fine ethical tone, and the inspiring challenge it makes in its claims for the rights of the soul are conveyed in fervent and burning words. It is a book for the present crisis such as all professing Chrsitians would do well to ponder. We earnetly commend it to our readers.

God is a Father,
Man is a brother,
Life is a mission and not a career;
Dominion is service,
Its sceptre is gladness,
The least is the greatest,
Saving is dying,
Giving is living,
Life is eternal and love is its crown.

—Owen Lovejoy.

National Unitarian Temperance Association.

WHO SAYS PROHIBITION?

EVERY professing Christian, and every Unitarian, ought to know whether he is on the side of the Brewers and the Drink Interests, or on the side of curtailing the indulgence in drink. And every abstainer should make up his mind whether he is for prohibition or against it. The sensible course seems to be to favour any step that goes in the direction of prohibition. Those who want total prohibition cannot wisely withhold support of any measure of curtailment that goes part way.

The beneficial effects of prohibition in the United States are amazing: Judge Walsh, in the District Court, North Carolina, said, "Under eight years of prohibition our bank deposits increased from 49 to 137 million dollars, or 180 per cent. Building and loan associations increased from seven to thirty-one million dollars, or 220 per cent. in assets and 650 in home building."

In Birmingham City, Alabama, fire loss has been reduced from 1,250,000 dollars to 416,000 dollars. The police force has been reduced one third, crime and murder reduced to a minimum, and the new City jail, which cost 100,000 dollars, is not needed, and has been given for the housing and training of delinquent children.

In Chicago the deputy Coroner says that before prohibition from 75 to 80 unclaimed bodies went for burial every two weeks! Now he does not get a load in four weeks! He used to receive from the House of Correction from one to five bodies of alcoholics daily; now he receives about twenty in six months.

In April, 1920, a Labour Party Conference in Glasgow voted 269 for prohibition, and 187 against, and the Scottish Trades Union Congress on a later date voted 110 for prohibition, with 74 against.

An official paper issued by the British Government says that "Immense quantities of food materials barley, wheat, and maize, are used in this country for the manufacture of beer and spirits. As beer and spirits are almost valueless as food, all this grain is lost for food purposes. If this grain were available for food, both for man and beast, the price of bread and meat would be lowered."

These facts should carry much significance with all who put human welfare first in importance.

Rev. H. BODELL SMITH,

MOTTRAM, MANCHESTER, is at liberty to take SUNDAY ENGAGEMENTS.

"'RELIGION (on one side of it at least) is an inwardness, a sacred hush, a resting. It is the soul resting in itself, and in the thoughts of its Divine Ally—a musing, a contemplation, a vision of the Unseen, a feeding upon hidden manna.' Can we have religion in that sense in our Church? We can, if we wish, if only we want it very much. We do want it very much, but we do not always reckon with the conditions for getting it. There must be a desire to cease conversation a little while before the service begins. While the organ is playing try to still the outward, restless weary self. Pray sincerely with the help of Whittier's words:

'Drop thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.'"

—From the "Auckland Calendar."

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